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THE REVOLUTIONARY

Jim Morrison could be said to have revolutionized his corner of the beauty industry, writes **Summer Rayne Oakes**
From issue 21 of *Lucire*

IN HIS 24 YEARS in the industry, Jim Morrison hasn't skipped a beat. Just like the iconic rock star who he shares his name with, Morrison is a legend. With eight years as President of L'Oréal US, manager of several celebrity product lines, and now CEO of Big Sexy Hair, Jim is arguably one of the best beauty brand strategists in the business. From hair to skin care, Morrison has brought us many of the products that we have come to not only love, but swear by. In person, Jim Morrison is as debonair as they come. His sophisticated nature, however, is matched by his down-to-earth, charismatic disposition and common sense—qualities that have undoubtedly helped with his unequivocal success in the industry.

Talk about a record career. When did it start?

I've been in the beauty industry, officially, for 24 years, which seems impossible to me since I feel like it started yesterday.

You jump-started L'Oréal US when you were there. Can you talk about that?

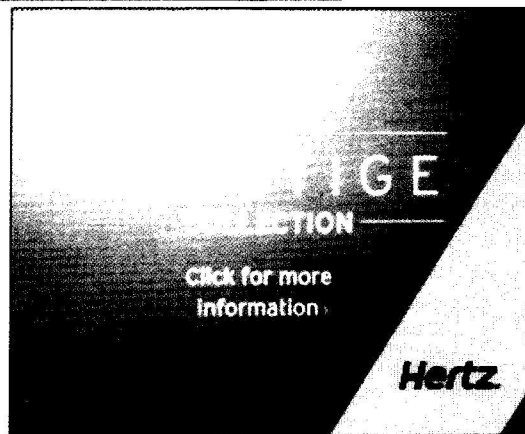
L'Oréal was a major part of my résumé. I spent eight years there as President (1992–December 2000). During that time, we bought Redken, Maybelline, Kiehl's, Soft Sheen, Matrix, Johnson, and Carson. I was responsible for every aspect of the Redken acquisition, which has turned out to be the most successful acquisition in the Beauty business.

What did you begin working on after L'Oréal?

After L'Oréal, I honestly thought I would do something radically different, but I became involved with several different Hollywood celebrities and really got intrigued with the whole “celebrity–personal care” connection. I was personally responsible for the Phat Farm–Baby Phat–Coty deal and did work for Britney Spears and Brooke Shields. I even started a company with Olympic gold medal winner Amanda Beard, to launch a line of hair care and sun care products.



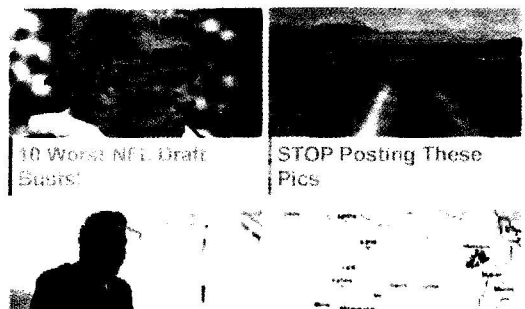
Jim Morrison

Katherine McPhee, Big Sexy Hair's signature face, tries on jewellery on the *Crown Princess*.

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“Nonsense.” As long as there is someone who evokes real emotion in people and as long as a company can match that person with a product that’s really awesome, why would

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Is it imperative to have well-known people associated with the brand to ensure success?

Today, the key components to success in personal care are "aspiration" and "emotional change." We use celebrities to define the aura of a brand and try to personify it in products. That celebrity needs to be someone who women aspire to being like or living like. But ... aspiration isn't enough. The products have to be exceptional. Not mediocre. If that product (perfume, shampoo, hair colour, skin care product) is amazing and can really lift a woman up (emotionally) then you have the recipe for something truly extraordinary. A lot of people are saying, 'We've come to the end of the whole celebrity-personal care run. It's saturated.' I say, 'Nonsense.' As long as there is someone who evokes real emotion in people and as long as a company can match that person with a product that's really awesome, why would it end?!

You're with Big Sexy Hair now. What made you make that move?

I got involved as a partner at Sexy Hair in March, for several reasons, mainly because it was a super-cool company with a great young image, but also because I really respected the founder, Michael O'Rourke, who dreamed up Sexy Hair and is a true hair-genius, [and] it gave me a chance to really do my own thing. No board of directors in France, no one telling me what not to do. So far it's been incredible.

Katharine McPhee is the new spokesperson for Big Sexy Hair. How did you come to choose her?

I saw Katharine McPhee when there were about 12 contestants left on *American Idol*. She blew me away. I loved her grace, her style, her poise, her voice and her hair! I wanted her to be the face of Sexy Hair because she represented everything that I had in my head for the brand: youth, beauty, talent, class, a young sophistication, and sexiness. It was really a rush when I found out that she and her mother had been using Sexy Hair products for six or seven years!

What is your vision for Sexy Hair?

Sexy Hair has a chance to be one of those once-in-a-lifetime stories; like an Aveda or a Paul Mitchell or even a Redken: an idea that becomes reality and truly has an influence on an industry. It can become "an emotional brand" and can become an "evolutionary company" in the personal care industry. The sky is truly the limit!

You bring a lot of expertise and momentum. What is your personal philosophy in building a brand?

When I come into a company or manage a brand, I bring a very simple philosophy, and that is 'Our job is to make people feel better about themselves.' Personally, professionally however you want to internalize it, we win if we make people feel great. So now think about how simple it becomes to develop a mission or a business strategy. It's really clear whether you're succeeding or not; you just need to see those smiles on your customers' faces. Then, when you talk about "job satisfaction", what could be more rewarding than being a walking, talking breath of fresh air, an emotional lift? •